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Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains an account of new developments and the assistance accorded to Mongolia by the Secretariat and relevant United Nations bodies since the previous report on this subject (A/71/161) was issued in July 2016.

During the period under review, Mongolia has continued to receive international recognition for its nuclear-weapon-free status and to promote other nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. Mongolia has continued to seek further institutionalization of its nuclear-weapon-free status.

The Government and people of Mongolia have received assistance from various Member States and United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes, including the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations Development Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 71/43, entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status", the General Assembly invited Member States to continue to cooperate with Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen Mongolia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the inviolability of its borders, its independent foreign policy, its economic security and its ecological balance, as well as its nuclear-weapon-free status. The Assembly also appealed to the Member States of the Asia-Pacific region to support Mongolia's efforts to join the relevant regional security and economic arrangements. The Assembly further requested the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations bodies to continue to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the aforementioned necessary measures and requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its seventy-third session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request and is based on the information concerning the implementation of the resolution received to date from Mongolia and from Morocco, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

II. Activities related to Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status

3. As a responsible member of the international community, Mongolia has pursued an active policy within the United Nations and has contributed to promoting the Organization's noble goals. About 16,000 Mongolian peacekeepers have served in various peacekeeping operations. Mongolia has initiated and successfully promoted the adoption by the General Assembly of resolutions on the right of peoples to peace, disarmament week, education for all, cooperatives, rural women, the rights of landlocked developing countries, promoting democratic reform and education for democracy.

4. Mongolia is committed to a nuclear-weapon-free world and has consistently supported efforts by the international community to promote the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects and to achieve nuclear disarmament.

5. Mongolia actively participated in the negotiation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and voted in favour of its adoption on 7 July 2017. The national process towards ratifying the treaty is under way.

6. As a demonstration of its commitment to maintaining international peace and security, Mongolia declared its territory a single-State nuclear-weapon-free zone in 1992. Since 1998 the General Assembly has considered the issue of Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status and has adopted resolutions on the subject every two years.

7. Mongolia celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of its nuclear-weapon-free status in 2017. In September 2017 the Secretary-General and the President of Mongolia exchanged congratulatory messages on the occasion.

8. In his message, the Secretary-General expressed his deep appreciation to the Government and people of Mongolia for their achievement in the fields of nuclear

disarmament and non-proliferation. He also applauded Mongolia for its continued efforts to help to lead the way towards a more peaceful and prosperous world.

9. The President of Mongolia, Battulga Khaltmaa, in his message, reassured the Secretary-General that Mongolia was ready to further cooperate with the United Nations and Member States and to implement jointly with the relevant United Nations institutions the provisions of the General Assembly resolutions on strengthening Mongolia's international security by reinforcing its nuclear-weapon-free status.

10. The present report provides an account of activities conducted over the past two years in implementation of Assembly resolution 71/43.

11. Since the previous report, on the implementation of Assembly resolution 69/63 on Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, was submitted in June 2016, the Government of Mongolia has continued its efforts to strengthen its national security by promoting the continued implementation of the resolution at the international and regional levels.

A. Measures taken at the international level

12. The seventeenth Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries was held on Margarita Island, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on 17 and 18 September 2016. In their final document the Heads of State or Government expressed support for Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status and for the policy and measures pursued by Mongolia to consolidate and strengthen that status.

13. The eighteenth Mid-Term Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement was held in Baku on 5 and 6 April 2018. In their final document the ministers welcomed the twenty-fifth anniversary of the declaration of Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, on 25 September 2017, and commended Mongolia's efforts towards achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

14. In her statement to the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons at its first session, which was held in Vienna from 2 to 12 May 2017, the representative of Mongolia noted the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status and emphasized the country's contribution to strengthening its international security and its role in nuclear non-proliferation and confidence-building.

15. In his factual summary of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was held in Geneva from 23 April to 4 May 2018, the Chair stated that States parties recognized the continuing contributions that the Antarctic Treaty, the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga), the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty), the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty) and the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia (Semipalatinsk Treaty), and Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status in accordance with the parallel declarations adopted by the nuclear-weapon States and Mongolia on 17 September 2012, were making towards attaining the objectives of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

16. Mongolia participated in, and welcomed the joint ministerial statement issued at, the eighth Ministerial Meeting in support of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, in 2016, and the final declaration and measures to promote the entry into force of the Treaty adopted by the tenth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of

the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, in 2017. Thus Mongolia seized every opportunity to support and underline the importance of the early entry into the force of the Treaty as a universal and legally binding security assurance to non-nuclear-weapon States.

17. On 3 May 2018, during a panel discussion on cooperation among nuclear-weapon-free zones organized on the sidelines of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Mongolia expressed its readiness to become the point of contact for the fourth Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, as a recognized nuclear-weapon-free State.

B. Measures taken at the regional level

18. Mongolia participated in the regional dialogue and consultation on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which were held in Jakarta on 13 and 14 March 2017 and on 21 and 22 March 2018, in preparation for the Preparatory Committee sessions held in 2017 and 2018. The representative of the Government of Mongolia noted in his speech the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status and introduced the actions taken by the Government during the last quarter of a century to institutionalize that status.

19. A series of conferences and meetings were organized during the period under review in the context of further promoting the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security. Thus, on 15 and 16 June 2017 and on 14 and 15 June 2018 Mongolia hosted the fourth and fifth conferences in the series. Whereas the first three conferences had been organized at track 2 level, the most recent two conferences in 2017 and 2018 were held at track 1.5 level. The participants were Government representatives and academics from Canada, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, France, Germany, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the United States of America, as well as representatives of various United Nations entities and other relevant international organizations and institutions. The agendas of the conferences included not only north-east Asian security issues but also potential projects in the energy, infrastructure and environmental sectors. Many interesting ideas and views were expressed by the participants on the main topics of the conferences. The presentations offered a range of analyses of the present situation in north-east Asia, its security environment, the strategic interests of relevant countries and prospects for the future. The conferences proved once again that the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue continues to enjoy broad support. For instance, Professor Noboru Miyawaki of Ritsumeikan University stated that the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue was the only setting that covered all the political entities in north-east Asia. Mongolia is the only country in the region that does not have any unresolved issues, either territorial or political, with other regional countries or any other country. The aim of Mongolia is to provide a neutral ground for constructive dialogue and engagement. The Government of Mongolia has expressed its intention to continue its efforts to facilitate a peaceful and comprehensive solution to the outstanding issues in and around the Korean Peninsula and to continue to hold conferences as part of the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security in the future.

20. In 2017 and 2018 the Mongolian non-governmental organization Blue Banner organized national and regional round-table discussions to contribute ideas on practical ways and means to further institutionalize Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status and shared its findings with the Government. The second and third meetings of the Ulaanbaatar Process were held from 14 to 16 November 2016 and on 29 and

30 August 2017. The Ulaanbaatar Process, convened by the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict in Northeast Asia and by Blue Banner, is an effective regional track 2 dialogue on north-east Asian security issues. The second meeting of the Panel on Peace and Security of Northeast Asia was held in Ulaanbaatar on 24 and 25 June 2017 in collaboration with Blue Banner, the Research Centre for Nuclear Weapons Abolition and the Asia-Pacific Leadership Network for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament to discuss current topics to enhance the mutual understanding of regional security issues in north-east Asia.

C. Measures taken at the national level

21. On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, an International Conference on Nuclear Disarmament Issues on the theme "Global and regional aspects" was organized in Ulaanbaatar by the Institute for Strategic Studies and the Mongolian non-governmental organization Blue Banner on 31 August and 1 September 2017. A statement was adopted at the conference declaring that the move to a single-State nuclear-weapon-free zone was an important national measure to ensure the security of Mongolia. The statement noted that it was also a novel international measure to fill a possible grey area in the emerging nuclear-weapon-free world.

22. On 2 May 2017 an academic symposium concerning the twenty-fifth anniversary of the nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia was organized by the Mongolian National University and Blue Banner for students and academics. Ideas for practical ways and means to further institutionalize the nuclear-weapon-free status were discussed.

23. With a view to ensuring the effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2014), in cooperation with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), experts held a round-table meeting in Ulaanbaatar from 8 to 10 May 2017 on strengthening the implementation of the resolution. Experts from relevant ministries and State agencies took part and discussed the potential development of a voluntary national action plan, as well as the expansion of cooperation with the United Nations, OSCE, other relevant organizations and Member States on the implementation of the resolution. The round-table meeting was followed by the second round of consultations in Vienna from 18 to 20 September 2017. The meeting continued the discussion on the draft voluntary national action plan.

III. Non-nuclear aspects of Mongolia's international security

24. Measures have also been taken to promote non-nuclear aspects of security as they are an integral part of the national security concept of Mongolia.

A. Economic security

25. Mongolia is endowed with mineral resources, a strong potential in agriculture and tourism and a young and dynamic population. Its long-term future is promising but in recent years it has been hit hard by the sharp decline in commodity prices and foreign direct investment. Hence, in the short term, the Government of Mongolia intends to revitalize the economy through implementing policy measures, including the Economic Recovery Programme under the Extended Fund Facility of the International Monetary Fund, to restore economic stability and debt sustainability while protecting those who are most vulnerable.

26. On 7 February 2018 the Government approved its three-pillar development policy as a main component of the national investment programme for the subsequent three years. The Government placed people at the centre of its policy through formulating strategies on a multi-pillar economic development policy, an accountable governance policy that promotes justice, and a human-centred social policy.

27. To enhance regional integration in north-east Asia, Mongolia is actively engaged with its neighbours on transit transportation and infrastructure development. The third tripartite meeting of the Heads of State of China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation was held in Tashkent in June 2016. The three Heads of State signed an agreement on establishing an economic corridor between their countries and agreed to implement 32 projects. In August 2017 they agreed on three priority projects, namely the central railway corridor, the central highway corridor and the energy sector project (electricity transmission line), and they are in the process of setting up a mechanism to coordinate implementation of the projects along the economic corridor. The fourth tripartite meeting of the Heads of State of China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation was held in Qingdao, China, on 11 June 2018.

28. In December 2016 China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation signed the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network, marking another major step in trilateral cooperation. On 8 June 2018 Mongolia and the Russian Federation signed an intergovernmental agreement on terms for rail freight transit transport.

29. The Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries entered into force on 6 October 2017. Twelve landlocked developing countries, namely Afghanistan, Armenia, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Nepal, Paraguay and Tajikistan, had ratified the multilateral agreement by May 2018. The International Think Tank, which is based in Ulaanbaatar, works to support landlocked developing countries in tackling persistent and emerging development challenges by providing evidence-based advisory services, sharing knowledge, presenting a portal and digital library of research papers and information on issues of interest to such countries, organizing thematic meetings and workshops, and providing support for collaboration among landlocked developing countries, South-South engagement and global cooperation. The first meeting of the Board of the Governors of the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries was held in Ulaanbaatar on 21 and 22 May 2018 and the inaugural meeting of the International Think Tank at the ministerial level was held in Ulaanbaatar on 11 and 12 June 2018. The participants of the inaugural meeting discussed a broad range of issues relating to foreign direct investment and the economic diversification of landlocked developing countries, information and communications technology connectivity and landlocked developing countries and the challenges and opportunities of transit transport and trade facilitation for such countries, and adopted the Ulaanbaatar Declaration.

30. The Mongolia-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement entered into force on 7 June 2016. It is the first ever free trade agreement for Mongolia and is expected to promote the liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment between the two countries and to deepen the mutually beneficial economic partnership in a wide range of areas. To improve market access in its main trading partners, Mongolia is studying the feasibility of free trade agreements with the Eurasian Economic Union, China and the Republic of Korea.

31. The Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation between Mongolia and the European Union entered into force on 1 November 2017. The Agreement provides a general framework for promoting bilateral, regional and international

cooperation between Mongolia and the European Union in all areas of cooperation, such as trade, the economy, development aid, agriculture, rural development, energy, climate change, research and innovation, education and culture.

32. The State energy policy adopted in 2015 set an ambitious goal for Mongolia to produce 30 per cent of its energy demand from renewable resources by 2030. Its solar and wind resources are estimated at 7,000 TW and 5,000 TW respectively. With these resources Mongolia essentially has the unlimited potential to export clean energy to countries in the region. Mongolia is working with its partners to implement the Gobi Tech and Asian Super Grid projects to supply renewable energy for north-east Asia. The projects offer countries in the region a wide range of economic, social and environmental benefits, including energy security, job creation and the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions.

33. Promoting the country's economic security and preventing risks and threats associated with growth requires concerted and cooperative actions on the part of the Government of Mongolia, political parties, the business sector, research institutions, non-governmental organizations and the media. To that end, the Mongolia Economic Forum has been held annually since 2010. In addition to hosting policy discussions, the Forum is significant in establishing extensive business networks, cooperation and understanding. The 2018 edition of the Mongolia Economic Forum was held on 21 and 22 May 2018.

B. Human security

34. The national security concept identifies human security as one of the fundamental pillars of Mongolia's national security. Creating a healthy and safe living environment, ensuring food security, guaranteeing security of residence and protecting persons from becoming victims of crime and assault are defined as the basis for ensuring human security.

35. It should be highlighted that, while a relatively new phenomenon in Mongolia, combating human trafficking is becoming a serious issue. According to studies undertaken by the non-governmental organization Gender Equality Centre, over 200 persons become victims of human trafficking annually. Although some measures have been taken in recent years, including the adoption of a national programme and the establishment of relevant systems to monitor its implementation, the number of cases is on the rise. The National Programme to Combat Human Trafficking (2017–2021) was adopted in May 2017. It aims to strengthen implementation of the human trafficking law, prevent the occurrence of human trafficking and protect victims.

36. Food security remains an important issue in Mongolia, not only because of the negative impacts of global climate change and environmental degradation, but also because of its own specific handicaps. Agricultural and food industry policies are formulated within the national development priorities articulated in the 2030 Sustainable Development Vision, the Government action plan for the period 2016–2020, national programmes on food security, livestock and industrialization, the first meat and milk production campaign and the crop cultivation programme. A national forum on food security in Mongolia was hosted in September 2017 by the office of the President and co-organized by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry, the Mongolian Food Producers Association and FAO. The forum resulted in specific recommendations for actions to streamline the existing legal environment, making it more favourable to food producers in accessing long-term soft loans, improving domestic food production, enhancing food safety inspections and controls, and raising knowledge and education among consumers on healthy food consumption. From 11 to 15 June 2018 the eighth Multi-Stakeholder Partnership meeting of the

Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock was held in Mongolia and organized by FAO. Between 200 and 250 participants from all continents discussed the sustainability of the global livestock sector during the meeting.

37. Mongolia has undertaken systemic legal reforms to protect and promote human rights. In 2017 and 2018 a number of important pieces of legislation entered into force, including revised laws on the elderly and domestic violence, the revised Criminal Code and new laws on benefits for single mothers and fathers with numerous children, youth development and violations.

38. A joint project with the European Union, the first-ever Human Rights Dialogue between Mongolia and the European Union, was held in Ulaanbaatar in March 2017 to identify potential areas for cooperation. As a follow-up to the dialogue, a project financed by the European Proposal Support Fund began in October 2017 to facilitate the implementation of the revised Criminal Code and the core international human rights treaties.

C. Environmental security

39. As a result of climate change, Mongolia has become exposed to multiple environmental challenges, including desertification, drought, land degradation and wild forest fires. Thus, preserving a balanced ecosystem, protecting natural resources, ensuring their appropriate use and rehabilitation and promoting green economic growth are the main goals of the Government action plan for the period 2016–2020.

40. With the support and cooperation of international organizations and bilateral donors, Mongolia has established and expanded its requisite legal framework, ensured compliance with international conventions and agreements and implemented national programmes and projects aimed at addressing the increasing environmental problems.

41. With the support of the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and other international organizations, the Government of Mongolia approved the action plan in January 2016 to implement the green development policy, demonstrating its commitment to developing a sustainable development model and a low carbon economy. Through various projects at the national level, Mongolia has ensured compliance with international legal instruments, including the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, marking progress in areas such as the sound management of persistent organic pollutants, which is important in ensuring the environmental security of the country.

42. On 1 September 2016 the parliament of Mongolia ratified the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Mongolia has developed its intended nationally determined contribution and will work to implement its target of a 14 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

43. At the request of the Government of Mongolia, the environmental performance review for Mongolia, conducted by the Economic Commission for Europe in cooperation with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, was launched on 22 May 2017. The review evaluated the country's efforts to abate air pollution, improve water management, reduce waste, conserve biodiversity and combat desertification, and also focused on progress in greening the economy, in particular the forestry and health sectors.

44. As a national follow-up to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the parliament of Mongolia adopted the revised a law on disaster protection in February 2017, and the mid-term strategy to implement the Sendai Framework was approved by the Government in December 2017. Mongolia hosted

the second Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Ulaanbaatar from 3 to 6 July 2018 on the theme "Preventing disaster risk: protecting sustainable development". The conference took stock of the implementation of the Sendai Framework over the past three years and charted regional actions on disaster risk reduction in the coming years.

45. The United Nations Development Assistant Framework for the period 2017–2021, signed on 3 June 2016, provides, under its outcome area 1 "Promoting inclusive growth and sustainable management of natural resources", for action aimed at supporting national green economy strategies, promoting clean technologies, reducing environmental risks and poverty in sectors such as agriculture, forestry, mining and industry, protecting ecosystem services and mitigating disaster risks. The project on localizing the Sustainable Development Goals in Ulaanbaatar has been implemented and the road map for the 2030 Sustainable Development Vision in Ulaanbaatar has been prepared.

D. Conclusion

46. The report of the Government of Mongolia on the activities it has undertaken in implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/43 demonstrates once again the country's resolve to fully implement the provisions of the resolution at the national, regional and international levels.

47. As a result of the country's consistent efforts and the support of the international community, the nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia today enjoys wide international recognition. Although Mongolia has not been recognized as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, its unique status has been widely recognized as a contribution to nuclear non-proliferation and promoting regional confidence and predictability.

48. For its part, Mongolia has demonstrated its readiness to cooperate with other Member States and relevant United Nations bodies and specialized agencies in strengthening the non-nuclear aspects of its security that would contribute to stability, greater trust and mutually beneficial cooperation in the region and beyond.

IV. Assistance provided by Member States and United Nations entities

49. The present section is based on the information received to date from Morocco, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, IAEA, UNDP and FAO concerning their respective assistance activities during the reporting period.

A. Morocco

[Original: French]
[8 May 2018]

50. Morocco is firmly convinced that the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons requires efficient United Nations disarmament mechanisms.

51. Morocco, recognizing that peace through disarmament is a global public good, is making every effort to contribute to the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world that is less inclined to engage in an arms race at the expense of the vital need to fight poverty, pandemics and environmental degradation.

52. Morocco, a State member of the Non-Aligned Movement, hereby expresses its recognition and full support for the international nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia.

B. Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

[Original: English]
[15 May 2018]

53. Mongolia is a landlocked country with an immense territory of 1.5 million km^2, a population of 3 million people and vast agricultural and mineral resources. As a landlocked developing country, Mongolia suffers from the challenges of isolation from world markets, high trade and transport costs, limited or low-quality infrastructure, delays at borders and bottlenecks related to customs procedures and border crossing regulations, and productivity and structural constraints. The level of development in Mongolia is estimated to be about 15 per cent lower than it would be if it were not landlocked.[1]

54. Economic growth slowed sharply in the period 2014–2016 amid declining exports due to the continued weakening of the commodity market, slower growth in the key export market of China and declining foreign direct investment. Real growth in the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2016 was just 1 per cent. The economy recovered strongly in 2017, growing by 5.1 per cent,[2] buoyed by strong coal exports, a recovery in foreign direct investment and improved business sentiments. The growth outlook remains positive in 2018 and beyond.

55. However, the economy has become increasingly reliant on the mining sector, which accounts for 20 per cent of GDP, twice the ratio a decade ago.[3] The share of primary commodities in exports from Mongolia has risen from 68 per cent in 2000 to 86 per cent in the period 2014–2016.[4] In contrast, manufactured goods accounted for less than 3 per cent of exports in the period 2014–2016. The value-added contribution of the manufacturing sector, which is a key component of industrialization, stood at just 8 per cent in 2016 and has declined dramatically since the early 1990s. This suggests that Mongolia has a very limited capacity to produce and export manufactured goods.

56. As a landlocked country, Mongolia is physically isolated from major world markets and is highly reliant on its two immediate neighbours, China and the Russian Federation. Mongolia's main partner by far for exports is China, which accounted for 79 per cent of total export value in 2016, while China and the Russian Federation together account for 57 per cent of Mongolia's imports.[5]

57. This lack of diversification of exports and markets, a common challenge affecting landlocked developing countries, makes Mongolia more vulnerable to further changes in commodity prices and other external shocks. Mongolia should aim to diversify exports, focusing on higher value-added products and high-productivity

[1] United Nations, Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, *The Development Economics of Landlockedness: Understanding the development cost of being landlocked*, 2013. Available at http://unohrlls.org/custom-content/uploads/2013/10/Dev-Costs-of-landlockedness.pdf.

[2] The World Bank in Mongolia, Overview, available at http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mongolia/overview.

[3] Ibid.

[4] UNCTADstat database.

[5] World Integrated Trade Solution database.

sectors and on linking into regional and global value chains in order to integrate into the global trading system.

58. Regional integration is an important element of economic and regional security for Mongolia and there is a correlation between regional security and international security given the country's strategic location. Recent efforts by Mongolia to achieve greater regional integration include signing the country's first ever free trade agreement in 2015, with Japan. Developments are under way to achieve greater cooperation and integration between China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation. The three countries signed a trilateral economic partnership agreement in June 2016, which includes the creation of an economic corridor, and the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network in December 2016. The projects to be implemented within the framework of the corridor will be developed in line with the Steppe Route initiative of Mongolia, the Silk Road Economic Belt initiative of China and the Eurasian Economic Union initiative of the Russian Federation.

59. Regional trade integration and the development of regional infrastructure should also be supported by efforts to harmonize and simplify the legal framework on trade, transit and transport and to implement trade facilitation measures. Accession to and ratification and effective implementation of international conventions on transit transport and trade facilitation are key means for landlocked developing countries like Mongolia to reduce transit transport costs and delays and ensure smoother cross-border trade. Mongolia is a party to some of the key conventions, including the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods and the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets. In addition, in November 2016 Mongolia ratified the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement, which has important provisions of relevance to landlocked developing countries, including Mongolia, for ensuring a smoother, cheaper and faster flow of goods across borders.

60. The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States continues to support Mongolia and other landlocked developing countries by raising international awareness of the needs and challenges of those countries, mobilizing international support for the landlocked developing countries and coordinating the response of the United Nations system. The Office continues to coordinate the monitoring and follow-up of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024. It supports landlocked developing countries, including Mongolia, in effectively mainstreaming the Vienna Programme of Action into national development strategies and has supported the organization of a national workshop on the mainstreaming of the Vienna Programme of Action for landlocked developing countries, held in Ulaanbaatar on 27 and 28 April 2016. The Office also conducts research and produces knowledge products for the benefit of landlocked developing countries, including Mongolia, on issues such as transit, transport, infrastructure, trade and trade facilitation, and has been undertaking advocacy efforts to promote the ratification of key international trade and transport conventions and the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

61. The Office of the High Representative has continued to provide substantive support for the operationalization of the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries, which is hosted by the Government of Mongolia in Ulaanbaatar. The Think Tank provides a centre of excellence for high-quality research and policy advice to contribute to the sharing of experiences and the further strengthening of the capacities of landlocked developing countries.

62. The Office of the High Representative actively advocated for the ratification of the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries, which came into force on 6 October 2017 after 10 landlocked developing countries ratified it. The Office has been supporting the interim management of the Think Tank in its full operationalization. The first meeting of the Board of Governors of the Think Tank was held on 21 May 2018 in Ulaanbaatar and its inaugural conference was held in Ulaanbaatar on 11 and 12 June 2018 with the support of the Office.

C. International Atomic Energy Agency

[Original: English]
[3 May 2018]

63. During the reporting period, IAEA continued to support Mongolia in meeting its safeguards obligations and nuclear non-proliferation commitments by providing assistance to enhance the country's State System of Accounting for and Control of Nuclear Materials. Safeguards-related training was provided during the reporting period. In July 2016 Mongolia participated in IAEA-led training sessions such as a regional familiarization workshop on the Safeguards Implementation Practices Guide on Establishing and Maintaining State Safeguards Infrastructure and a regional seminar on safeguards and security. Representatives of Mongolia attended an IAEA regional training course on the responsibilities of States with a small quantities protocol, held in Australia in December 2016.

64. With regard to nuclear safety and security, IAEA worked on the development and implementation of an Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan to assist Mongolia in applying a structured and holistic approach to nuclear security capacity-building, as well as enabling increased coordination among IAEA, the State itself and potential donors. The Plan, officially approved by Mongolia in September 2015, covers all aspects of nuclear security, including human resources development, border detection and radioactive source security. Under the Plan a national workshop on threat assessment and the design basis threat was held in Ulaanbaatar in August 2017. Furthermore, assistance was provided for the development of a national nuclear security detection capability. Following an expert mission on nuclear security detection to Mongolia in June 2016, IAEA organized a technical visit on detection equipment for Mongolia in Vienna in April 2018, which included the provision of hand-held detection equipment and associated training for Mongolian officials.

65. Mongolia participated in the open-ended meeting of legal and technical experts on implementation of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, held in Vienna from 27 to 29 June 2017.

66. Continuous assistance has also been provided by the technical cooperation programme through training, expert advice and the procurement of equipment and material for the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology. During the 2016–2017 cycle of the technical cooperation programme, Mongolia implemented projects focused on capacity-building in the areas of animal health and production, radioimmunoassay technology in nuclear medicine, brachytherapy, radiotherapy, radiation safety, groundwater resources management and radioactive waste management.

D. United Nations Development Programme

[Original: English]
[15 May 2018]

67. The UNDP Country Programme for Mongolia for the period 2017–2021, which was approved in 2016, is centred on supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the realization of sustainable human development in Mongolia. The nexus of economic growth, social development and environmental sustainability constitutes the main focus of the programme, with governance as a key enabler. The UNDP programme addresses Goal 1 on eradicating poverty, Goal 10 on reducing inequalities and Goal 16 on promoting inclusive societies. The programme is informed by priorities drawn from the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and is well aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan.

68. Through the country programme, UNDP supports the implementation of resolution 71/43 by promoting inclusive economic development, strengthening disaster preparedness and supporting environmental and ecological biodiversity.

69. By promoting inclusive growth and helping to build resilience, UNDP supports Mongolia in strengthening economic security at both the national and subnational levels. The following interventions are aimed at supporting the capacity of the Government to address vulnerabilities and persistent poverty through evidence-based policymaking, planning and monitoring:

(a) With UNDP support, the Sustainable Development Goals are being integrated into the country's national policies and plans. UNDP has helped to strengthen institutional capacities to formulate, implement and monitor policies and programmes that take into account the Goals, including on poverty and equity, and to better align short-term (annual) budget planning and mid- and longer-term development objectives. UNDP has further supported the Government in developing macroeconomic models to enhance the Government's capacity for evidence-based policymaking.

(b) UNDP actively supported the operationalization of the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries. Mongolia, together with other landlocked developing countries, can now call upon an intergovernmental organization to represent its interests and serve as a platform for knowledge and research as well as for pooling resources and expertise. With the ratification of the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries in October 2017, the Think Tank became a fully fledged international organization, headquartered in Mongolia. By hosting its interim secretariat and nurturing its operation through joint projects, UNDP was instrumental in the transition of the Think Tank to a multilateral organ. The Government of Mongolia demonstrated strong ownership and support through resources and political commitments in addition to the technical and operational support provided by UNDP. The Think Tank addresses areas that are critical for the economic security of Mongolia, including international trade, communications and infrastructure. These areas are particularly important in the context of the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, on which Mongolia and China are cooperating.

(c) UNDP continued to provide support to local authorities through nationwide training activities for local councillors, knowledge exchanges and best-practice sharing. The role of local authorities has been strengthened to oversee the delivery and quality of basic services and therefore to contribute to economic security and inclusiveness at the subnational and community levels. As the institutional capacities of local councils are strengthened, they proactively work to address new

development dimensions in their jurisdictions, including focusing on more vulnerable groups such as women, disabled people and youth in local decision-making.

70. UNDP also cooperates with the Government of Mongolia in the area of disaster risk management:

(a) In 2017, with UNDP support, the law on disaster management was formally updated, establishing a formal national mechanism for cross-sectoral coordination. A strategy to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction was also endorsed by the Cabinet.

(b) With UNDP support, climate change and disaster risk reduction have formally been included in university curricula, contributing to the integration of climate change and resilience in the education system.

(c) To ensure that effective actions are carried out across the country, disaster risk management plans and services were piloted in target soums (districts). Using community-based approaches to disaster risk management, the localized emergency plans have proved effective in providing timely disaster responses. An early-warning mass messaging system is now used nationwide to deliver targeted weather and hazard warnings to herding communities. In 2017 a total of 946,244 people (close to one-third of the population) in all 21 aimags (provinces) benefited from the system by receiving timely hazard warnings during sand, wind and snow storms.

71. In order to maintain an ecological balance, UNDP supports Mongolia through a range of environmental initiatives:

(a) UNDP has significantly contributed to the expansion of the country's local protected area system by working with local governments and communities to agree on and designate local protected areas. Establishing new protected areas has led to a recovery in biodiversity and improved hydrological conditions in target locations. This is demonstrated by the return of endangered species, such as marmots and argali sheep, in target areas.

(b) UNDP continues to support national capacity development for the sustainable use of land, water and forest resources and for enhanced environmental governance. This includes a land degradation offset mechanism in the mining sector and ecosystem-based adaptation support.

E. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

[Original: English]
[14 May 2018]

72. Over the past decades FAO has supported the Government of Mongolia in developing its food and agriculture policy, strengthening animal health and veterinary services, and providing emergency responses and assistance to drought-affected herder households. Current projects cover disaster risk reduction, the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation and sustainable forest management, support for integrated livestock-based livelihoods, enhanced food and nutrition security and anticipatory action to mitigate the impact of the recent harsh winter.

73. FAO is dedicated to continuing its assistance to Mongolia in addressing key issues in the food and agriculture sectors, including strengthening veterinary services, combating animal diseases, supporting pasture management and governance of tenure, introducing environmental technologies and establishing food control management systems. The Organization is also addressing the impacts of climate change on livestock and the crop sector and supporting natural resources

management, together with early-warning and early-action systems and emergency preparedness initiatives and responses.

V. Conclusion

74. As described in the present report, Member States and various United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes have provided assistance to Mongolia in addressing the developmental, ecological, economic, humanitarian and human security aspects of its international security. The Secretary-General hopes that the assistance provided by the United Nations will further contribute to consolidating the nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia and achieving sustainable development and balanced growth.